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ADDRESS

BY

only
HON. CHARLES M. STEDMAN
OF NORTH CAROLINA

Delivered at Memorial Hall, District of Columbia, by
request of the Confederate Veterans' Association, Tuesday, March 21, 1916

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ADDRESS

BY

HON. CHARLES M. STEDMAN.

Mr. WEBB. Mr. Speaker, under the leave granted to me to extend my remarks in the RECORD I include an address of my colleague [Mr. STEDMAN] delivered on the 21st of March, 1916, at Confederate Memorial Hall, District of Columbia, by request of the Confederate Veterans' Association of the District of Columbia.

The address is as follows:

Mr. STEDMAN. Ladies and gentlemen, comrades: When I received from the Confederate Veterans' Association of the District of Columbia an invitation to deliver an address here to-night, it could not be aught but a very great pleasure to me to accept. It came to me from a camp named in honor of one whom it was my high privilege to know, to whose division I belonged in the Army of Northern Virginia, and for whom I had profound respect and admiration. Maj. Gen. Harry Heth, by his example and conduct upon every field, inspired his men with those high sentiments and great qualities which will perpetuate the fame of the Confederate soldier in ages yet to come. It is an occasion which appeals to the hearts of all who admire moral and personal heroism as exemplified by its greatest exponents. It is a monthly reunion of Confederate soldiers, a small remnant of those who have preceded us by a day's march along the route of the innumerable caravan—the mighty dead—not inappropriately called the deathless dead—for though they have yielded in the order of nature to the conquerer of humanity, they are not dead but sleeping. Their lives are still continued in their uttered thoughts—their spoken words—in their undying acts and unfading example. Their history shall ever be kept alive, that invoked by the brightness of its record, the pages of the book will be kept still illuminated, that at some future day yet

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farther down the aisles of time, the youth of that generation may be directed to a still unfailling and continuous panorama without tarnish or blemish.

The historian in ages far remote from the era in which we live will record the glories of this great Republic. He will gild his pages with its achievements in war and in peace. The reader will linger long over their recital. The description of this beautiful and attractive Capitol will not fail to charm and delight him. He will be lost in admiration and wonder when he learns that within its limits, more than half a century after the close of the Civil War, which shook the continent to its foundations, there was a Confederate camp where representatives of every section of our common country met in friendly intercourse, proclaiming to the world the complete unity of sentiment existing everywhere throughout this broad land, and foretelling its grandeur and enduring greatness through all the ages to come.

I have been requested to adopt as the theme of my discourse "North Carolina in the War between the States." A subject so splendid in itself, so replete with great and heroic action, seldom falls to the lot of any speaker. When I reflect upon the self-denial and the unshaken fortitude of the people of North Carolina during that unhappy period, when the splendid and unexcelled achievements of North Carolina soldiers during that same era pass in review before my mental vision, I can but feel my inadequacy to so great an undertaking.

If aught I say shall seem to detract in the slightest degree from the merit of any Confederate soldier from any State or from my loyalty to this great Republic, whose flag protects and shields all its citizens, I ask that you do not so construe my words, but ascribe them to the enthusiasm which characterizes all the children of North Carolina for her great name. The character and reputation of every Confederate soldier will ever be near to my heart, and the glory and honor of our common country will ever command my sincere and unchanging fealty.

The part acted by North Carolina in the greatest drama of modern times—the War between the States—history will preserve without blemish upon its pages. It has long since passed be-

yond the pale of legitimate controversy that in the number of troops furnished to the Southern Confederacy, in proportion to its white population, and in the losses sustained by those troops, she stands first of all the States which made up that galaxy of great names.

It is likewise true that no troops in any corps of the Confederate Army were more thoroughly equipped and provided for in every way necessary to their efficiency and comfort, both as to arms, food, and clothing, than were the soldiers from North Carolina.

In considering the number of troops furnished by North Carolina to the Confederate Army, her attachment to the Union of the States will ever demand your consideration and attention, and her loyalty to her sister States of the Confederacy when once her faith was pledged, will claim the admiration of all who have an honest pride in national honor, wherever it may be found. North Carolina was next to the last State to secede from the Union, and in February, 1861, voted against secession by more than 30,000 majority; yet with a white population of 629,942, and a military population of 115,369, being one-ninth of the military population of the 11 seceded States, she sent to the Confederate Army 125,000 men, one-fifth of its entire enrollment, which was 600,000, according to the accepted estimate approved by Gen. Cooper, the adjutant general of the Confederacy. Maj. A. Gordon, who was on the staff of the adjutant general of North Carolina, and who was thoroughly conversant with the organization of the North Carolina troops, estimates her contribution to the Confederate Army at 127,000. Gov. Vance, after a thorough examination of the records of the adjutant general's office, stated the number to be 125,000, and Capt. S. A. Ashe, who, at the request of the State Literary and Historical Association of North Carolina, gave to the consideration of this subject careful research, adopted the figures given by Gov. Vance, and in his report says they are as correct as it is possible to make them. Lieut. Gen. Stephen D. Lee, in an address delivered at Asheville, N. C., stated North Carolina furnished 22,942 more troops than any other State. Of the troops furnished to the Confederate Army by North Carolina,

four regiments of infantry and one of cavalry were sent to the Army of Tennessee.

Of the soldiers present for duty, North Carolina had a larger proportion than naturally fell to her lot. They were ever ready in camp or upon the field of battle. Of the 92 regiments which assailed and defeated the right flank of McClellan's army in front of Richmond, 46 were from North Carolina. Of the 16 brigades engaged in the first day's fight at Gettysburg, 7 were from North Carolina.

The First North Carolina Regiment, commanded by Col. D. H. Hill, later a lieutenant general, was the first regiment sent by the government to Yorktown and the first to arrive at Bethel. Over 800 of the 1,200 present when the action commenced were from North Carolina.

The first Confederate soldier killed in battle was Henry L. Wyatt, of the Edgecombe Guards, Company A of that regiment, who fell at Bethel on the 10th of June, 1861.

At Reams Station, on the 25th of August, 1864, after a previous assault by other troops had failed, the three North Carolina brigades of Cooke, Lane, and MacRae, in number less than 2,000 men, drove the Federal troops from the field, capturing their breastworks, with 2,150 prisoners, 3,100 stands of small arms, 12 stands of colors, 9 guns and caissons. The result of this brilliant engagement was hailed with great rejoicing throughout the South and shed a declining luster upon the Confederate battle flag, upon which the sun of victory was about to go down forever. Gen. R. E. Lee publicly and repeatedly stated that not only North Carolina but the whole Confederacy owed a debt of gratitude to Lane's, Cooke's, and MacRae's brigades which could never be repaid. He also wrote to Gov. Vance, expressing his high appreciation of their services. From his letter I make this extract:

HEADQUARTERS ARMY NORTHERN VIRGINIA,
August 29, 1864.

His Excellency Z. B. VANCE,

Governor of North Carolina, Raleigh, N. C.:

I have frequently been called upon to mention the services of the North Carolina soldiers in this army, but their gallantry and conduct were never more deserving of admiration than in the engagement at Reams Station on the 25th ultimo.

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The brigades of Gens. Cooke, MacRae, and Lane, the last under the temporary command of Gen. Conner, advanced through a thick abatis of felled trees, under a heavy fire of musketry and artillery, and carried the enemy's works with a steady courage that elicited the warm commendation of their corps and division commanders and the admiration of the army.

On the same occasion the brigade of Gen. Barringer bore a conspicuous part in the operations of the cavalry, which were no less distinguished for boldness and efficiency than those of the infantry.

If the men who remain in North Carolina share the spirit of those they have sent to the field, as I doubt not that they do, her defense may securely be trusted in their hands.

I am, with great respect,

Your obedient servant,

R. E. LEE, *General*.

The regiments from North Carolina engaged in this battle again illustrated those high qualities which will perpetuate the name and fame of the Confederate soldier in years to come. Unshaken by the fall of Vicksburg and the disaster at Gettysburg, undismayed amidst the general gloom which was settling upon the fortunes of the South, they exhibited the same enthusiasm and valor which had marked their conduct upon every field where they stood for the honor, glory, and renown of their State.

The greater part of the Confederate infantry who were engaged in the last battle fought at Appomattox were from North Carolina. They were commanded by Maj. Gen. Bryan Grimes, a North Carolinian.

The last charge made and the last volley fired at Appomattox was by a North Carolina brigade, commanded by Gen. W. R. Cox, of North Carolina.

The last capture of an on by the Army of Northern Virginia was made by Roberts Brigade of North Carolina cavalry.

No State stacked so many muskets at Appomattox as did North Carolina.

These facts are beyond dispute. The accuracy of the first two just mentioned in connection with the fight at Appomattox has been established by a statement made in writing in the year 1879 by Gen. Grimes, which will be found in volume 11 of Moore's History of North Carolina, and which has never been contradicted. The statement of Gen. Grimes is corroborated by a statement made by Gen. William R. Cox, which was also pub-

lished during the same year in volume 11 of Moore's History of North Carolina. If more evidence could possibly be needed, it is furnished by the statements of Brig. Gen. W. L. London, of the Second Brigade in the North Carolina division of the United Confederate Veterans, who was serving on Gen. Grimes's staff on the morning of the surrender, and of Hon. Henry A. London, of the Thirty-second North Carolina Regiment, who carried the last orders at Appomattox. Both Gen. W. L. London and Hon. Henry A. London are now living in Pittsboro, N. C., model examples of the highest order of citizenship represented by Confederate soldiers, equally distinguished in war and peace.

Wherever the flag of North Carolina floated on land or sea it was without tarnish, the emblem of honor, of courage, and unchanging fortitude which endured to the end.

The *Shenandoah*, commanded by James Iredell Waddell, a North Carolinian, flew the Confederate battle flag at its mast-head more than six months after Gen. Lee's surrender.

Shall their immortality be reckoned by their blood? Forty thousand two hundred and seventy-five soldiers from North Carolina gave their lives to the Confederacy, more than one-third of her entire military population, and a loss more than double in percentage than that sustained by the soldiers from any other State.

The entire Confederate loss during the Civil War, killed on the battle field and died of wounds, was 74,524. The loss of North Carolina soldiers was 19,763, more than one-fourth of the whole.

Of the 10 regiments of either side which sustained the heaviest loss in any one engagement during the war Georgia, Alabama, Tennessee, Illinois, New York, Pennsylvania, New Jersey furnished one each, and North Carolina furnished three.

The Confederate loss at Gettysburg was 2,592 killed and 12,707 wounded. Of the killed 770 were from North Carolina, more than one-fourth.

Wherever the tide of battle was strongest and the harvest of death greatest on that field of carnage, there could be seen the battle flag of North Carolina. Her dead sons were found far up its blood-stained slopes.

The three brigades at Gettysburg suffering the heaviest loss were Pettigrew's from North Carolina, with 190 killed; Davis's from Mississippi—composed of three regiments from Mississippi and one regiment from North Carolina—with 180 killed; Daniels's from North Carolina, with 165 killed.

No brigade in Pickett's division, whose laurels won upon that field I trust may grow brighter with each revolving year, suffered so great a loss as the Twenty-sixth North Carolina Regiment. Its loss was 86 killed and 502 wounded, the largest sustained by any regiment on either side during the Civil War. Company F of that regiment, with 3 officers and 84 men, lost every officer and 83 of the 84 men in killed and wounded. Thirteen standard bearers of the regiment were shot down. Upon that same field one company in the Eleventh North Carolina Regiment lost 2 of its 3 officers killed and 34 of 38 men killed or wounded. The color company of the Thirty-eighth North Carolina Regiment had every man either killed or wounded.

At Sharpsburg the Third North Carolina Regiment lost 330 in killed and wounded of 520 men which it carried into action, and upon that field Company C of the Fourteenth North Carolina Regiment lost every man, either killed or wounded. At Chancellorsville the same company, which carried into the fight 43 men, lost every one in killed or wounded but 1.

The charge of the Fifth North Carolina Regiment at Williamsburg ranks in military history with that of the Light Brigade at Balaklava. The regiment lost 197 in killed and wounded of 240 men which it carried into action. That charge gave to immortality its illustrious commander, Col. D. K. MacRae.

At Seven Pines the Fourth North Carolina Regiment went into the fight with 25 officers and 520 noncommissioned officers and men and lost in killed and wounded every officer and 462 men. At Bristoe Station the Twenty-seventh North Carolina Regiment lost 291 of 426 men in less than half an hour.

The four regiments of North Carolina infantry—the Twenty-ninth, the Thirty-ninth, the Fifty-eighth, and the Sixtieth—and the Sixth Regiment of North Carolina Cavalry, upon the field

of Chickamauga, rivaled the deeds of their brothers in the east and linked their names forever with imperishable renown. It has been established by the highest and most impartial testimony that "the point where the topmost wave of the tide of southern battle broke nearest to the unbroken line of Thomas's defense" was reached by the Fifty-eighth North Carolina Infantry.

This was the unanimous report made by five commissioners appointed by Gov. Carr, of North Carolina, to locate the position of the North Carolina regiments upon the field of Chickamauga. One of the commissioners was an officer of high reputation in the Federal Army who afterwards made his home in North Carolina and won the friendship and esteem of all who knew him. I allude to Judge Clinton A. Cilley.

When stating the exceptionally great losses sustained by the troops from North Carolina there is no intention to assert that they were braver or better than those of any of her sister States. The soldier from North Carolina desires no praise, no laudation, no eulogy, at the expense of his brother Confederate soldier. The fortune of battle on many different fields furnished North Carolina soldiers the opportunity for their great achievements, and they ever proved themselves to be equal to the occasion.

It has been said by some writer that the qualities which distinguished the soldier from North Carolina were like unto those which made the legions of Julius Cæsar famous.

Lieut. Gen. A. P. Hill, when asked what troops he preferred to command, replied :

Unquestionably North Carolinians; not that they are braver where all are brave, but brave as the bravest; they are the most obedient to command.

To this trait of character, obedience to orders, many have ascribed their preeminence.

Without underestimating this great quality in a soldier, it will be found upon scrutiny that a higher, nobler, and more exalted virtue than even the spirit of obedience to orders gave to the Confederate soldier, from whatever State he came, his superiority on the battlefield.

A supreme sense of duty was the cardinal trait of character which gave to him that moral power against which it is vain to hurl trained legions and endless battalions. It was the dauntless moral resolution of the soldiers of the South which made their great deeds possible.

Without that moral power to sustain them, the incomparable legions of Lee would have in vain struggled for so long a time to roll back the tide of invasion across the banks of the Potomac, and the marvelous campaigns of Stonewall Jackson would have found no place in history to gild forever with a romantic luster the beautiful valley of Virginia. Neither famine nor pestilence nor mighty armies carrying in their track the destruction of all that was near and dear to them could subdue their invincible will. In the splendid future which awaits the southern portion of this Republic there is no character the study of which will more elevate its citizens and fit them for its blessings than that of the Confederate soldier. The capstone of the arch of his glory was the moral power which sustained him upon the battle field and which will forever perpetuate his fame.

An incident which illustrates the supreme sense of duty which can only be imparted by moral firmness, as exhibited by a North Carolina soldier, deserves to be recorded amidst the feats of heroes. The conduct of a private by the name of Tillman, in the Forty-fourth North Carolina Regiment, had attracted the favorable notice of his brigade commander, and he was at his request attached to the color guard. Tillman's name was also honorably mentioned in orders of the day from brigade headquarters. Soon thereafter, in front of Petersburg, the regiment became severely engaged with the enemy and suffered heavy loss. The flag several times fell, as its bearers were shot down in quick succession. Tillman seized it and again carried it to the front. It was but an instant and he, too, fell. As one of his comrades stooped to raise the flag again, the dying soldier touched him and in tones made weak by the approach of death said, "Tell the general that I died with the flag." The tender memories and happy associations connected with his boyhood's home faded from his vision as he

rejoiced in the consciousness that he had proved himself worthy of the trust which had been confided to him.

Wolfe died upon the heights of Abraham the death of a hero, and his spirit took its flight to another world and left as a legacy to his countrymen words which will forever live.

Nelson, at Trafalgar, illustrated by his conduct and speech his supreme sense of duty to England and her glory.

The Scotchman who died at Waterloo with his bagpipe in his hand, by the sabre of the curassier of the guard, whilst thinking of Ben Lothian and playing an air of his native land, has been immortalized by Victor Hugo. But which of these three—aye, who of all those who live in song and story—is more worthy of the crown of immortality than that humble country lad whose grave to-day is unnoticed and unknown?

It would be idle for me to attempt to-night to give a record of the achievements of North Carolina soldiers upon the different fields of their glory. There was not an engagement in which the Army of Northern Virginia participated in which they did not contribute to its immortal renown. The day has come when our whole united country accords to them the full measure of praise to which they are entitled as representing the highest and best type of American manhood.

I am greatly indebted to Chief Justice Walter Clark, of North Carolina; to Hon. Henry A. London; and to Capt. S. A. Ashe for assistance in securing, as far as it can be furnished with accuracy, a statement of the number of troops furnished by North Carolina and their losses. I have used for reference the History of North Carolina Regiments, edited by Chief Justice Clark, to which work he gave great and unstinted labor without remuneration or reward, except the gratitude of the Confederate soldier. I have also been aided by the information gained from an eloquent speech of Hon. Henry A. London, of North Carolina, delivered by him a few years ago, which was reproduced in the fifth volume of the History of North Carolina Regiments, and by the report of Capt. S. A. Ashe, of North Carolina, made to the North Carolina Literary and Historical Association.

For the splendid organization which equipped and supplied North Carolina troops, they are largely indebted to the provident foresight, practical business ability, and untiring efforts of Gov. Z. B. Vance, the great war governor of their State, who thereby endeared himself forever to all North Carolinians.

North Carolina not only clothed her own troops during the entire war, but furnished clothing for troops from other States, and when Lee's army surrendered had in store and ready for use 92,000 suits of uniform, with many thousand blankets and a large amount of leather. During the winter succeeding the battle of Chickamauga, North Carolina sent to Gen. Longstreet's corps 14,000 suits of clothing, and when the great drama was drawing to a close North Carolina was furnishing food and supplies to a large part of Lee's army.

Gov. Vance in a memorable speech delivered at White Sulphur Springs, W. Va., 18th of August, 1875, stated that he was told by Gen. Joseph E. Johnson "that when his army was surrendered at Greensboro he had in his depots at North Carolina, gathered in the State, five months' supplies for 65,000 men and that for many months previous Gen. Lee's army had been almost entirely fed from North Carolina."

For the comfort of her soldiers when at home sick, wounded, or traveling to and from the army North Carolina established hospitals and inns at many different points in the State along the lines of railway.

She did more than this. For the helpless wives and children of soldiers who might be in distress she established depots of grain, salt, and provisions for their subsistence and appointed committees to provide for them and see that they were not neglected.

The soldier who was sleeping upon some field afar off under the stars in northern Virginia rested calmly as he dreamed of the loved ones at home, for he knew that if he fell in the conflict of to-morrow that they would be cared for by the great State which sent him to the battle field.

My friends, can you wonder that North Carolina is still to all her children the well-beloved mother and sovereign, whose name

ever brings to them when exiled from home by the decree of fate that poetry of youth and memory of early happy days which neither gold nor power nor place can buy.

If commemorative words were needed to perpetuate the fame of the Confederate soldier, I should be all unhappy here to-night. But it is not so. It will live, transmitted from generation to generation, when the costliest tombs erected by the love of their countrymen have perished by decay and crumbled into dust.

It may not seem proper for me to make this prediction, but I do so with a reverent love for all portions of this great Republic. The day will come, though I trust it may be far distant, when the intentions and ideas of the founders of this great Government will be disregarded by those who, in the wild greed for money and amidst the dissolute luxury engendered by the vast accumulation of wealth, have forgotten the teachings of better and purer days and the very existence of a constitutional form of government, as framed by our ancestors, will be in jeopardy. Then will be found amongst a people regenerated by fire and blood that high and broad and lofty patriotism which shall constitute them the strongest, safest, and best defenders of the land of our fathers in its entirety, and as the suffering and oppressed of every land and every clime shall still turn their steadfast gaze toward this Western Hemisphere they shall rise up and call you blessed.

Have we learned naught from the silent endurance, the patient agony, the deathless valor of the Confederate soldier? It can not be. His life and his conduct have taught us the lesson over again which history has ever repeated.

It is neither on the greatest fields of battle nor places where the most calamitous bloodshed has taken place that the recollection of future ages is chiefly riveted. It is moral grandeur which produces a durable impression. It is patriotic heroism which permanently attracts the admiration of mankind. The day may come when the memory of the fields of Gettysburg and Chancellorsville, of Fredericksburg and Sharpsburg, shall be dimmed by the obscurity of revolving years and recollected only as a shadow of ancient days, but even then the enduring forti-

tude and patriotic valor of the Confederate soldier who followed the banner of Robert E. Lee and Stonewall Jackson will stand forth in undecaying luster amidst the wreck of ages and survive unshaken above the floods of time.

Friends and comrades, let us never fail to defend the fame and achievements of the brave men whom the South sent to the battle field.

Death, which destroys the pomp and power of this world, has only placed the seal of immortality upon their lives. The sacred charge of their fame is intrusted to you, my countrymen and countrywomen. Guard it devoutly, gravely, justly, and truly, that it may remain untarnished in its pristine glory, not alone with this generation but with all those who may come after us until time shall be no more. Let the glorious example left by them be preserved for untold ages and for every people from the rising to the setting sun. If history be false, let tradition preserve it, and on every anniversary of our memorial days let eloquence proclaim it as a heritage for all humanity, which it has elevated and adorned with a pathos and glory which belongs to the civilized world.

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